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DRAFT REPORT

Addendum

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PROGRAMME QUESTIONS

Proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001

Programme 8. Development support and management services

1. At its 27th meeting, on 20 June 1996, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered programme 8, Development support and management services, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001.

Discussion

2. A number of delegations supported the proposed programme of work and emphasized the importance of activities geared towards developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Some delegations stressed the need to avoid duplication between this programme and the work programmes of other United Nations organizations and considered that the programme should focus on the activities in which it has a comparative advantage.

3. Some delegations observed that they could find little in the programme that did not duplicate work being undertaken elsewhere and questioned whether the Department for Development Support and Management Services should exist at all. Other delegations expressed strong support for the work of the Department.

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4. A number of delegations expressed the view that all the provisions of General Assembly resolution 50/225 of 19 April 1996 on public administration and development should be reflected in subprogramme 8.1.

5. One delegation asked about the budgetary implications of the proposal in paragraph 8.6 (a) of the proposed medium-term plan to set up a clearing-house mechanism in the area of public administration.

6. A number of delegations questioned the mandate for post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction. Other delegations supported the focus in that area, which in their view, was in conformity with General Assembly resolution 50/225.

7. Some delegations felt that the lack of financial and technological resources, information and expertise, as well as the debt crisis and unemployment, should be mentioned in subprogramme 8.2 as factors that pose a threat to the environment and social development.

8. Several delegations expressed the view that subprogramme 8.2 should indicate that poverty eradication is a prerequisite for the realization of sustainable development and is an overriding priority for developing countries. Some delegations considered that poverty eradication is important, but it is not the only prerequisite for sustainable development.

9. Some delegations questioned the need for mandates for the promotion of surveying and mapping techniques, as indicated in paragraph 8.8 (d). Other delegations considered that those activities were important and that assistance in that area should be provided also at the regional and subregional levels.

10. Several delegations noted that subprogramme 8.1 should include a statement regarding the role of the State in redressing economic and social injustices.

11. Some delegations were of the view that the objectives of subprogramme 8.1 should not go beyond what has been agreed upon in the context of General Assembly resolution 50/225. The clearing-house mechanism and participation of major groups should be in full conformity with the provisions of that resolution as well as with the practices and procedures of the United Nations. Furthermore, the provisions of the resolution should be taken fully into account and implemented in a comprehensive and integrated manner, comprising all the necessary elements at the national and international levels, particularly those related to technology transfer, financial resources and enabling international economic environment through new initiatives for strengthening institutional capacity for enhancing international development cooperation. All the impediments to sustainable development, particularly in the developing countries, should be adequately addressed. The elements indicated in paragraph 8.7 are not dealing with all the necessary factors. The problem should be tackled at the national and international levels, including the need for an enabling international economic environment conducive to development.

12. One delegation proposed that paragraph 8.1 be redrafted as follows:

"The general purpose of the programme, of which the Department for Development Support and Management Services is in charge, is, in the first place, to promote and create a favourable climate for development in every country, particularly in the developing countries and the least developed among them, as well as in the countries with economies in transition. Thus, it should improve and support, by means of technical cooperation, the activities of Member States aimed at strengthening their administrative and financial systems for development, consolidating institutional capabilities and infrastructures and implementing economic and social policies, according to their national development priorities, so as to contribute to sustainable development, concentrating on the needs of the population and the eradication of poverty. To that effect, the programme makes available to the developing countries and those with economies in transition, technical know-how and personnel specialized in the fields of public administration and finance, economic and social policy and planning, as well as the planning and management of natural and energy resources."

The same delegation proposed that the title of subprogramme 8.1 should be "Public administration, finance and development management".

Conclusions and recommendations

13. The Committee recommended approval of programme 8 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, with the following modifications:

(a) Paragraph 8.2: In the last sentence, after the word "support" add the words "as requested by interested Governments";

(b) Paragraph 8.5: Replace the paragraph with the following text:

"During the past years, several factors have had an impact on the evolution of public administration, among them, technological advances, the fast rate and interdependence of political, social and economic world changes and their consequences for all countries, particularly the developing ones. In the light of this new world situation, it is necessary to improve the efficiency of public institutions and administrative procedures, and to establish rational financial management to face those changes and to support sustainable development in every country";

(c) Paragraphs 8.6 (c) and (d): [Does not apply to English text];

(d) Paragraph 8.6 (c): Replace the words "managing development programmes" with the words "improving the management of development programmes";

(e) Paragraph 8.6 (d): Replace the words "ensuring the maintenance of essential basic government services and functions during times of crisis and developing strategies for rebuilding a viable public administration in countries undergoing post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction" with the words "elaborating strategies, at the request of interested countries, for the

reconstruction of a viable public administration in the countries that are undergoing rehabilitation and reconstruction once a conflict is over";

(f) Paragraph 8.7:

(i) Replace the third sentence with the following text: "It may mean changing consumption patterns to increase the use of products, and production and consumption processes that have the least adverse impact on the global environment, taking into account the requirements and environmental concerns of developing countries";

(ii) Replace the last sentence with the following: "At the request of interested Governments, and according to their priorities, the Secretariat will cooperate in the definition of needs and the formulation of policies so as to tackle simultaneously poverty, degradation of resources and the needs of reconstruction once a conflict is over";

(g) Paragraph 8.8: Replace the second sentence with the following:

"The objectives of the subprogramme are to assist Governments and communities at the request of their respective Governments, as follows";

(h) Paragraph 8.8 (b): Insert the word "all" before the words "vulnerable groups" and delete the words "such as ethnic minorities, women, youth and the elderly, especially in the context of post-conflict and post-disaster rehabilitation";

(i) Paragraph 8.8 (e): Delete the words "to different levels of government, civil society, community institutions and entrepreneurs".